IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN RE: : 13-MDL-2458

EFFEXOR (VENLAFAXINE

LITIGATION

HYDROCHLORIDE) : Philadelphia, Pennsylvania PRODUCTS LIABILITY : October 25, 2013 LITIGATION

: 10:32 a,m.

TRANSCRIPT OF STATUS CONFERENCE BEFORE THE HONORABLE CYNTHIA M. RUFE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

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conference.

(The following was heard in open court at 1 2 10:32 a.m.) THE COURT: Good morning, everyone. 3 ALL: Good afternoon, Your Honor. 4 THE COURT: Please be seated. Welcome to the 5 first status conference for MDL-2458, Effexor Products 6 Liability Litigation. I am happy to see very familiar 7 faces, too familiar, but, anyway, welcome. 8 I was given a joint proposed agenda for this 9 status conference today, and that was submitted by 10 Stephen Corr in conjunction with Mark Cheffo, each have 11 been named already as the liaison counsel, and I 12 believe are unopposed for permanent positions in that 13 14 regard. So, knowing each and the quality of their 15 work and dedication and commitment to their MDLs in the 16 past, I hereby approve you permanently. We have some 17 other work to address. 18 So, I will turn to counsel. Follow your 19 agenda and would you like to address the Court first, 20 Mr. Corr? 21 MR. CORR: Absolutely, thank you, Your Honor. 22 Good morning. As always, it is a pleasure to be here 23

before you and glad to be here on the first status

I have spoken since our appointment with Mr. Cheffo on a couple of occasions trying to get some organization started between the two parties. One thing we did do, which was pretty simple, we submitted a proposed order on service just to identify the defendants and how they are to be served, and that will be helpful to the plaintiffs as they file their cases.

THE COURT: Is that the waiver of service PTO that I signed yesterday?

MR. CORR: Yes, I didn't see that then. Okay.

THE COURT: All right. It just got filed yesterday.

MR. CORR: That is. So, the first item on the agenda, we are just talking about an overview of the cases. The number of cases currently pending we did attach to the joint position statement and the case status report a listing, and I apologize, Your Honor, it was e-mailed to Nicole late. So, but the listing of those cases -- I did go down and talk to Tom Dempsey before we started today to get an updated list from him.

I am going to have to go back and talk with him again because he had on his list nine cases that were directly filed in the MDL and 36 cases that had

been transferred in to the MDL.

The list that we had provided had something like 44 cases pending in the MDL, or something. I forget how it was, but the numbers didn't seem to match to me, so I just want to make sure with him that -- I am not really sure how they come up on his reports.

Generally, I do check in with him before I come up for a status conference to make sure that we're accurate and going along.

THE COURT: I question the statistical process for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania as opposed to MDL. I tend to, because I have to deal with the cases jointly, include direct files in the MDL.

MR. CORR: Right.

THE COURT: Which they are permitted to be directly filed, but I don't exclude them, except perhaps the clerk of court has some reason to do that.

MR. CORR: Yes, he told me that that's just the way the report has to be run for him. So, he gives me two different reports, and then we just add them up. He says they won't include them all on one report for himself.

THE COURT: Well, I would like some similarity at least, because the reports that he is keeping get reported to the panel, which keeps

statistics, and I am often questioning that myself.

MR. CORR: Okay.

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THE COURT: So, look into it and then we will put our heads together.

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MR. CORR: Okay. Great. The other issue that we had on the agenda was other jurisdictions and In the joint position statement and case venues. status report we reported that there were two other jurisdictions, California state court and Pennsylvania state court, Philadelphia.

Currently, in the report we had, I think, four cases pending in California. We believe there is more like six or seven that are pending in California. I believe they involve McKesson, and that's why they are in California.

There are another maybe five or six that are in flux, they have either been removed or are waiting a ruling on that. There are issues there, but I think Mr. Cheffo could probably address that better than I can.

THE COURT: All right.

MR. CORR: And then in Philadelphia there were three cases pending. My understanding is that one of those cases there is an agreement to remove it and come here and the other two are still pending in

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Philadelphia.

I am not sure and maybe Mr. Cheffo can address this, too, but he told me that two of them had praecipies and had not had complaints yet, so they weren't removable yet. So, maybe that's the issue there.

But, other than that, those are the only two jurisdictions we are aware of. I have spoken with all of the applicants for the PSC, and in that meeting I was told they were not aware of any other jurisdictions, so from an anticipation standpoint I don't anticipate other jurisdictions to be involved other than California and Philadelphia.

THE COURT: Well, they have some time, and we are pretty familiar with the issues. You laid them out in the joint position statement. Of course, the McKesson additional defendant is a typical way to file complaints in multi-plaintiff cases in California.

It happens so often that I am looking for what McKesson has actually been held liable for and perhaps we are going to order some -- I have been thinking about this and this would be something to discuss with the PSC once they're formed, and Mr. Cheffo, I have been thinking about ordering preliminary discovery on that particular named defendant.

MR. CORR: Okay.

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THE COURT: Because, there are allegations of fraudulent joinder or a misjoinder or both, and I would like to deal with that in a more factual way now, Dealing with my experience in Avandia, I never did see McKesson be held liable.

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MR. CORR: Okay. Well, I will obviously be on notice of it and also we will talk that over, I am sure, at the PSC level as well.

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. CORR: Anticipated volume, Your Honor is familiar, obviously, with the Zoloft litigation and the Avandia litigation. We do not anticipate Effexor being the size of either one of those.

So, in discussions with Mr. Cheffo and with the PSC I think everybody kind of agrees that we anticipate this MDL to be somewhere between 150 to 200 cases, and right now that's a guess. I mean, we are just obviously early on in the litigation, but it seemed to match up from both sides, speaking with Mr. Cheffo, speaking with the applicants for the PSC, everybody feels that that's about the size that we should anticipate here.

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. CORR: Status of the cases currently

pending. As Your Honor knows, several cases were being pursued here in the Eastern District and they were all before -- I believe they were all before Judge Ludwig and some discovery had taken place there.

It is my understanding that three 30(b)(6) depositions have been taken in those cases.

Approximately one to two million pages of documents have been produced by the defendants in those cases, and they are being held, I believe, maybe -- I think Karen Menzies and Scott Nabers and Chris Coffin have been working on those. So, they have been the ones that are managing those documents right now.

THE COURT: All right.

MR. CORR: My understanding from speaking to those attorneys in those cases, there are some outstanding requests for production of documents. I don't know if there were motions filed on those or not, or if there are any sort of outstanding motions that have to be decided, but I think that everybody understands we are going to be starting anew here with some of that.

So, there were also interrogatories
exchanged, and I believe there may have been some
responses to those interrogatories. I am not certain
of that, I haven't seen it, but that's my understanding

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    of that.
              I did ask if there were any pending motions
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    in those cases. I think the only pending motions
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    before they transferred to the MDL were motions for
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    non-convenience, which obviously I think are now moot
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    given the MDL.
              And with that I don't think I have anything
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    else. Obviously the next issue was going to be the
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    applicants for liaison counsel, and I appreciate you
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    addressing that off the bat.
              It is always nice not to have to talk about
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    myself.
              THE COURT: Unless there is someone in the
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    house --
              MR. CORR: So, I get to sit and listen to
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    everybody else.
              THE COURT: -- that is opposing Mr. Corr, let
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    me know now or forever hold your peace.
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MR. CORR: That's the question that makes me nervous. So, I don't know if Mr. Cheffo has things he wants to add to this?

THE COURT: Good morning.

MR. CHEFFO: Good morning, Your Honor.

THE COURT: As to those motions to transfer,

I believe that they can be dismissed without prejudice

that may come up again, given a remand for trial.

MR. CHEFFO: Exactly, Your Honor. I think that's fine, Your Honor, thank you. And as usual, Mr. Corr did a thorough and accurate job, so I am not going to reiterate. I am just going to fill in some of the holes where I think I might have a little more information than Mr. Corr was privy to.

I think the numbers, you know, and obviously we have less information about the numbers of cases than the plaintiffs do, but what I have been told by the various folks is I think his numbers are correct.

I think with respect to the two jurisdictions, the state court jurisdictions, Mr. Corr is also correct. There was praecipies, there may now have been recently in two of those cases complaints filed, but I will expect that they will be removed and, you know, hopefully at some point transferred to Your Honor.

THE COURT: Are they assigned to a particular judge in Philadelphia who has been working those matters?

MR. CHEFFO: No, Your Honor.

THE COURT: All right. So, if there was any coordination with Philadelphia it would be through Judge Buddy New (ph), because he is ostensibly the head

of that mass tort program.

MR. CHEFFO: Exactly, Your Honor. I think that right now if these cases are removed there will be no, at least currently there will be no Effexor cases in the PCCP.

THE COURT: All right.

MR. CHEFFO: And with respect to California, that's a little bit different story. So, there are approximately six or seven cases that are in state court that have been filed, removed, remanded by those courts.

There are probably another half a dozen cases that are in that process, you know, and the way the process is now working is, you know, the cases get filed, we remove them, typically we will ask the courts to stay those cases, ask for the MDL panel to tag them and transfer them to Your Honor.

Some judges there will kind of wait. Others will just decide the remand motions, I am sorry. So, you know, that's kind of a work in progress, if you will.

THE COURT: Okay.

MR. CHEFFO: I think that those are -- my understanding is those are California only plaintiffs and I think it's the Robinson firm who has most of

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those cases that are seeking the remand, and maybe
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    Karen can correct me if I am wrong on that.
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              THE COURT: I think I saw that some
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    Philadelphia cases that were removed here already named
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    Wolters Kluwer as well?
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              MR. CHEFFO: I think that's correct, Your
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    Honor.
              THE COURT: So, I can expect some more
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    motions to remand?
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              MR. CHEFFO: I think those are Mr. Tracy's
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    and Ms. Pinto's cases. I am not sure if I saw it. You
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    will be speaking to that?
              MS. FELDMAN: I will speak to it today.
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              THE COURT: So, her colleague will speak for
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    her today.
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              THE COURT: You look a little bit like her,
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    the hair, but that's about it.
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              MS. FELDMAN: I am just taller.
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              MR. CHEFFO: So, you know, and I think
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    that's, in terms of these issues. I and perhaps Mr.
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    Heim had a comment or may have a comment or two on just
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    the process and, you know, we can save those until the
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    end if that's appropriate?
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              THE COURT: That's fine.
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              MR. CHEFFO: Thank you, Your Honor.
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              THE COURT: But, you do have an attorney at
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    your table --
              MR. CHEFFO: And I should have.
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              THE COURT: -- that I don't think was
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    involved in Zoloft?
              MR. CHEFFO: This is Sandy Bresnick.
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              MS. BRESNICK: Good morning, Your Honor.
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              MR. CHEFFO: She is a partner of mine at
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    Quinn Emanuel.
              THE COURT: Very nice to meet you.
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              MS. BRESNICK: Nice to meet you, Your Honor.
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              THE COURT: And good morning to you too, Mr.
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           All right. Now, I think that that is a good way
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    Heim.
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    to start.
              I don't think it is necessary that we review
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    at this time what is Effexor and what is this MDL and
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    the claims all about, because we have two very good
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    representations of that already.
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              One is from the MDL panel itself which
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    adopted essentially the suggestions from both sides
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    that we see repeated in the joint position statement,
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    even though there are advocacy issues involved in that
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    joint position statement that we will not have to
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    address yet.
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So, let's move on to the applications for the

plaintiffs' steering committee. I am, of course, familiar with just about every applicant and I don't need you to beg me, okay? There is not that many of you.

There is 11 applications and yet I am looking at a case, or an MDL, that is going to be smaller in size. But, sometimes the discovery necessary for these cases requires the same kind of work, initially, in the general issues, the general Daubert issues and choosing representations that need to move forward.

So, I am not sure the work is going to be any less, it may just be less intense at certain times. I also am looking at selecting a group that will be able to coordinate with the Zoloft and any other similar type litigation, whether it is MDL or not.

So, I am looking for those qualities of people that cannot only lead, but can direct and can coordinate, and along with that your experience means a lot to me.

One of the matters that means more to me these days is that you each, individually, and your firms have cases in the MDL where it is your primary focus.

I am not interested in helping build a state inventory of cases, not that occurs very often, but

sometimes it does and I want everyone's focus here to be committed to the MDL's purpose, which is to coordinate and discover and get these cases ready to be tried or settled.

Simple, it is simple to me if I keep that objective in mind. So, if you don't have any cases in this MDL, but I believe all of the applicants do, I think it is going to be hard to get on this. There may be some time in the future where you might.

If you have, potentially, cases I need to know how close you are to bringing them in. There aren't that many cases in the state system I just heard.

so, if there is other things out there yet unfiled you may not have to tell me about them now, but just give me your landscape and your future plans and that will help me. Also, if any of you are interested in a particular division of leadership or working on the PSC let me know that now.

If any of you are interested in being a state coordinator, a multi-district coordinator, not that I see too much of that going on right now and the need to, it is not like we're looking for those multiple Avandia cases in the tens of thousands, but I still think it is always good to have a point person, so

please let me know if any of you are interested in doing that as well.

All right. And if there is anything to add to your applications all you have to do is mention it. So, we have now, in no particular order, these are just the order that I think that they were filed in, we have Mr. Richards? Good morning.

MR. RICHARDS: Good morning, Your Honor. It is good to be here, I appreciate seeing you again. I am glad to be a part of this. I am Jason Richards. I am a partner of Aylstock, Witkin, Kreis & Overholtz, and I am with Bryan who you know well.

THE COURT: Well, I know you pretty well, too, you've been involved.

MR. RICHARDS: You do. You know Bryan a little bit more perhaps, but obviously Bryan is not as talented as I am. So, I will hope you will consider that in making the appointments.

THE COURT: That's why I am giving you the second word.

MR. RICHARDS: This will be my third MDL before Your Honor. I am involved in Avandia and Zoloft and now Effexor. You know, I started doing MDL work in 2004 with Bryan's firm and I have been primarily doing MDL work since then. I do some insurance stuff and

some class action stuff as well, but my main focus and my career at Aylstock has been MDL work.

I was heavily involved in Avandia, primarily because Bryan was co-lead counsel in Avandia and whenever you have a partner who is in your firm who is co-lead counsel of any MDL it requires a lot of teamwork.

So, I worked side by side with Bryan on most of the issues involved in the MDL in Avandia. It was a rigorous undertaking. I do a lot of briefing work. I wrote the petition for cert in the Supreme Court in Avandia which did not go so well for us.

But, in any event, my background really is a supportive role and that's primarily because --

THE COURT: On the Humana matter?

MR. RICHARDS: Yes, ma'am.

THE COURT: Okay. That's the only thing that I think that was actually attempted up there.

MR. RICHARDS: Yes, that's the only thing that was attempted and failed. My work has usually been in a supportive role and that's just because the nature of my firm, everybody practices mass tort, so folks like Bryan and some other partners have more experience than I do, have been doing it a little bit longer.

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They get their name, you know, they submit 1 their own applications. But, this was a good 2 opportunity for me to submit my application in Effexor 3 4 5 so. 6 7 8 9 can certainly let me know. 10 THE COURT: 11 12 13 THE COURT: 14 15

because Bryan is already involved in Zoloft, so, I did So, you know, it's in my application a lot of stuff, my qualifications, a little bit of my background is in there. If you have any questions about that you

I don't, but how many MDLs would you say you have been involved in overall?

MR. RICHARDS: Probably seven or eight --

And how many are --

MR. RICHARDS: -- it dates back to Fen-Phen.

THE COURT: -- currently open and active?

I am in charge of all of the MR. RICHARDS: SSRIs for our firm. So, I am involved currently in Avandia is kind of gone, but Zoloft is what I am heavily involved in right now and I work with the PSC in Zoloft and again just in brief writing, work in depositions and coordinated with defense counsel on PTOs and some of the standard stuff behind the scenes stuff.

You know, I don't get a lot of credit for it, of course, and that's fine with me, but I do a lot of

the behind the scenes work for that.

THE COURT: You write, don't you?

MR. RICHARDS: I do.

THE COURT: You've written articles and publications?

MR. RICHARDS: I have. I try and occasionally I will get lucky and somebody will offer to publish it. So, that's a lot of what I do.

My experience in Avandia, you know, has prepared me and I was involved in Fen-Phen and stayed up all night and did all of the late night stuff in Fen-Phen, because that was a tremendous litigation, at least for our firm. It kind of put us on the map and got us where we are today.

But, I have been involved in winners, I have been involved in losers. I won't mention any names other than Viagra. But, you know, I have seen the good and the bad and I know the ins and outs of the PSC, because I do a lot of the PSC work.

I know the politics of the PSC, which is not always my favorite part, but it is the part that goes along with MDLs and personalities matter, and I think the group we have here is a good group. I know everybody, and it is a good group.

I think the group that ends up, you know,

that the Court ends up appointing will be a group that can work together, and I am excited for the opportunity to make it work in that group.

One of the odd things for me is that although when I made my application everything was fine, you know, everything was good, and then lo and behold, Bryan Aylstock decides to steal my thunder and submit his own application.

I can assure the Court that wasn't intentional. We are not trying to stack the deck. Things just happened that way and that's just kind of the nature of the way things go. So, I hope that's not an automatic exclusion for me --

THE COURT: It's not.

MR. RICHARDS: -- or Bryan.

THE COURT: Well, I don't know about that, but it's not for you.

MR. RICHARDS: So --

MR. CORR: Do we get some say on the second one?

MR. RICHARDS: So, I don't want to take up too much time because obviously we have others to talk, but you mentioned the, you know, the need for coordination and to kind of have somebody be a point person to stay on top of what's going on in state

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I do a lot of the work with Bryan on the multi-district coordinator stuff for Zoloft, so I have some experience with that and I would volunteer for that position to the extent the Court deems fit to appoint someone in that position.

You know, I think the Court is well aware, though your work in the FJC about the role of the multi-district coordinator and how important it can be, and while there is only a California litigation, you know, of substance right now, you know, once this gets going sometimes other cases pop up, and the Court needs to be aware of other cases that pop up and what's going on in litigations, where discovery is, where trial dates are set.

So, I think it is important for the Court to have somebody to be the point person to keep an eye on the state court litigation, but not necessarily to give a report every month, it is not necessary, but to inform the Court for the openness and the cooperation the Court needs to work with in state court.

THE COURT: I agree with that.

MR. RICHARDS: So, I would happily volunteer for that position in light of the fact that Bryan stole my thunder.

 Otherwise, on a personal level, you know, I am married, I have been married for ten years, been with my wife for 12 years. I am in Pensacola now, I have a little baby girl who is two years old and wants to know when daddy is going to be home.

So, I want the Court to know I say that, I guess, to say when I apply to a PSC, which I have actually never done before, this is my first application, so when I apply to the PSC it means something to me, because if I am going to spend time away from my family it is going to be something that is important and something I feel I want to do and commit myself to doing it.

So, you will see me. If you appoint me you will see me at the hearings. I am not going to disappear and I look forward to the opportunity if the Court obliges me to work on the PSC and help out in any way I can, because although I will be multi-district coordinator if the Court appoints me, the way this stuff works is everybody is involved in everything.

So, my role won't be limited to that, it would be, you know, part of my role, an important role, but with a smaller PSC everybody has got to chip in.

So, I will be doing a lot of different things.

But, I look forward to the opportunity if the

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Court were to appoint me and thank you for your time.
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   If you have any questions I will be glad to answer
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   them.
              THE COURT: I have no further questions.
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   Thank you.
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MR. RICHARDS: Okay. Great. Thank you.

THE COURT: You're next, Mr. Aylstock.

I will try to keep it shorter. MR. AYLSTOCK: Good morning, Judge.

THE COURT: Good morning.

It is good to be back. MR. AYLSTOCK: have my application. Obviously, you know who I am. have been working on these SSRI birth defect-type cases since 2006.

A lot of or actually, everybody over there I have worked with on these cases over the years, and $\ensuremath{\text{I}}$ think you have a great group to appoint whoever you appoint and I know that we will work together and we will work very well together.

In my work in Paxil is where it began over at the mass tort program in front of Judge Moss. developed some experts, we helped with the litigation depository of all of the documents. We settled the cases, one case as we were walking into the courtroom.

So, we have worked them all of the way up.

Obviously, we are very active in Zoloft. So, we understand the issues very well with the SSRI cases and look forward to working on these cases as well. We have cases, so regardless of who the Court decides to appoint we have an obligation to our clients and we are going to be doing that.

One of the things that I am most interested in in the Effexor litigation is making sure that we're not too far behind the Zoloft litigation. Mr. Nabers firm did do those 30(b)(6) depositions. We do have a lot of the IND/NDA documents, so we are not starting from ground zero, we can capitalize on that.

But, I think that we can be lean and mean in this particular MDL and hopefully move to at least start to catch up with the Zoloft litigation in how we litigate this case and move it and take more depositions and so forth. So, I am anxious to do that.

I am sorry that I stole my partner's thunder. He absolutely does make me look good, which is hard to do sometimes, but whatever the Court decides I am here, I would like to participate in the leadership of this case if the Court would find it desirable, because I have a tendency to speak up no matter what, whether I am on leadership or not.

But, most of all I think that this case needs

to move and it needs to move toward trial and we need to keep in mind that there are a lot of people out there that have taken this drug.

It was the number seven prescribed anti-depressant, I think, in the year 2007. So, there is millions of women who have taken it and there is a lot of clients that we represent. It is certainly not as big as Zoloft, but there are a lot of clients and they all deserve their day in court and I am looking forward to pressing them toward that day.

THE COURT: Well, I know how you work, Mr.

Aylstock, and you got Avandia with Vance and Diane and

Joe and Tom off to a good start. But, you are involved
in many MDLs right now.

MR. AYLSTOCK: I am, Your Honor.

THE COURT: In fact, you are the leader of a large one, aren't you?

MR. AYLSTOCK: The transvaginal mesh MDLs and it is, right now, I think it is one of the largest MDLs there is. There is a very large team and that PSC is 56 members, I believe.

So, it is a very large team of people working on that, and my law firm has grown from just a few of us when Mr. Richards started, and now we have 16 lawyers and over 100 staff. So, I do have a lot of

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    support with that.
              I, obviously, am keeping plenty busy, but I
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    would commit to you and this Court and the people I
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    represent that I would be here and I would be working
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    hard on this case as well.
              THE COURT: And there is no problem with,
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    should I decide to do this, naming two partners from
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    the same firm?
              MR. AYLSTOCK: It actually has been done.
                                                           Ιt
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    was done in the mesh MDLs, in fact.
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              THE COURT: It is usually a financial input
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    and a lot of firms have said to me just pick one of us.
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              MR. AYLSTOCK: Right.
              THE COURT: But, I don't hear that coming
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    from you and Jason.
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              MR. AYLSTOCK: No, Your Honor.
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                           Okay. Thank you, very much.
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              THE COURT:
              MR. AYLSTOCK:
                              Thank you, Judge.
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              THE COURT: And Rosemary Pinto who couldn't
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    make it today?
              MS. FELDMAN: Rosemary Pinto couldn't make it
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    today, but you've got me. And I am sorry, Your Honor,
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I had surgery two weeks ago, so I don't stand up straight and I don't walk too fast.

THE COURT: Are you all right?

MS. FELDMAN: But, I am going to do the best I can. Your Honor, Ms. Pinto, we work kind of interchangeable, so I am just going to talk as what our work is.

THE COURT: But, you still better state your name for the record.

MS. FELDMAN: I am Laura Feldman, for the record, not Rosemary Pinto, but I am here to talk on her behalf. We have been involved in -- we started to get involved in the SSRI cases in the very beginning of Paxil. We were involved in Paxil until we resolved our docket, which was concluded in September of this year.

We were actually asked by GSK to go out and collect all of the remaining Paxil cases, so that they could review them for disposal, which we did. In the process we acquired a fairly substantial number of Effexor cases, given that it is a small number of cases that are out there, so that we have 30 cases that have at least passed an initial vetting process.

Unfortunately, because we were so involved in Paxil and because I have been out with surgery and Ms. Pinto is trying a Topamax case, they aren't in front of you yet, but that is our next project on our docket and we will have that to you.

FORM 2094

THE COURT: To file them directly here?

MS. FELDMAN: To file them directly. Anyway,
the cases that we have been involved in that have been
MDL cases have been Avandia, Zoloft, Yaz, Paxil was an
MDL to us, it wasn't to you, but it was to us.

We have also been involved in PPH, we still do all of the PPH or we do most of the PPH in Philadelphia. We are involved in almost all of the Topamax in Philadelphia, and our experience with SSRI cases is probably more extensive than, I am certain, anybody in the Philadelphia area, but probably most people because of what got filed in Philadelphia we got involved in all of those cases and we are familiar with all of those cases.

I personally am very, very interested in the science. Ms. Pinto really has an unbelievable historical understanding of what happened with these SSRI cases, what's happened with the FDA because of her involvement since the cases before they went to Judge Moss, when they were still with Judge Tereshko in Philadelphia. So, it goes back a great deal a long time.

Effexor is our next big group. We are not a large firm. We don't put on that we are a large firm, but we are very, very committed. We are very committed

to issues that especially involve women and especially involve children and that we are an all women run law firm and that's something that has been very important to us to keep near and dear to our hearts when we have been working and that's where our next project is.

Rosemary has participated in three Paxil trials in Philadelphia. She is picking her second Topamax jury today.

THE COURT: Is that in Philadelphia?

MS. FELDMAN: In Philadelphia. The first
Topamax case will go to the jury, I believe, on
Tuesday. She worked that up, left that when the
defense went on to pick the next jury with the next
trial team.

so, we have been very involved in these types of cases, we are very familiar with it and while we have not been in a leadership position in an MDL, we feel like we have put in our time and that we would be very interested in doing it and we will work very hard for whatever position Your Honor would be willing to give us.

THE COURT: And I will say that seeing that Rosemary Pinto did apply in the Zoloft litigation for the PSC, even though she hadn't been selected at that time she has been a committed member of that MDL.

works harder than any person I know. So, I am sure

MS. FELDMAN: She is a committed -- Rosemary

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that if Your Honor is inclined to put her on it she will make you proud for having done it. THE COURT: Do I get you too if I name her? MS. FELDMAN: We are the same person, I am just taller. Thank you, thank you, Laura. THE COURT: You're welcome. MS. FELDMAN: THE COURT: And Mr. Coffin? MR. COFFIN: Good morning, Your Honor. THE COURT: Good morning. MR. COFFIN: It is nice to be in front of you When I moved for transfer of the cases to this again. Court my primary argument in front of the panel was the efficiencies that I felt would be gained through you 16 17 and your staff. THE COURT: Oh, you are one of those flatterers, aren't you? MR. COFFIN: Well, I am coming around to a 20 point though, Your Honor. And I argue that the 21 efficiencies would be great because of your experience 22 not only with MDLs, but obviously with Zoloft and 23 thought later that maybe I should have some concern 24

about whether or not the burden that that puts on you

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and your staff would be very heavy.

I realize that and I think all of my colleagues realize that, and I am getting to the point that we appreciate that you have agreed to take on this task, because ultimately I do believe and I know my colleagues believe that we will have a lot of efficiencies in this case as a result. So, thank you for being willing to take this on and it is good to be in front of you again.

There are three points I want to try to go through quickly about my application and why I would like to be on leadership in this particular case. First of all, my experience in pharmaceutical MDLs is extensive and specifically MDLs related to serotonergic drugs, very similar to Effexor.

The second point I will make is my involvement specific to the Effexor birth defect litigation. There is only a couple of us who have actually been litigating the cases for the last over a year and a half at this point, but just over a year before I moved for the MDL.

The third point will be collaboration with other colleagues and the ability to work with other colleagues and I think those relationships are important. So, I want to hit those three topics. Did

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FORM 2094

you have something to interject, Your Honor?

THE COURT: No, I will wait.

MR. COFFIN: Okay.

THE COURT: I do, but I am going to wait.

MR. COFFIN: Okay. All right. Very good. So, my experience in pharmaceutical MDLs and specific with regard to serotonergic drugs, I will highlight four cases.

The first one is the Lexapro and Celexa

Products Liability Litigation which was in the Eastern

District of Missouri in front of Judge Sippel. I was

co-lead counsel in that case.

The second, I was on the PSC, actually before that case I was on the PSC in the Paxil Products
Liability Litigation in the Central District of
California. That was in front of Judge Pfaelzer, and
more recently co-lead counsel in the Lexapro and Celexa
Marketing and Sales Practices cases, which are in front
of Judge Gordon in the District of Massachusetts.

Last, but not least, obviously appointed by Your Honor in the Zoloft birth defect litigation. And I bring that up because it is important to Your Honor, obviously to know about our experience, but in my case it has really been focused and specific to serotonergic drugs, not just pharmaceuticals, but serotonergic drug

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cases. 2

So, the second point is my experience in this actual litigation. I filed what I think was the first case, but is certainly one of the first cases in the country, which is the Boyer case, and that was filed in February of 2012.

Since that time I have been litigating Effexor birth defect cases. Currently I believe I have nine cases in this MDL, but in the Boyer case I was actively involved. I was personally actively involved in litigating those cases.

I was involved in motions practice, I was involved in discovery including drafting interrogatories, drafting requests, answering discovery from the defendants, participating in depositions, participating in multiple conferences with Judge Ludwig, who you know the cases were consolidated So, I have been very active in this particular case.

THE COURT: Were they actually consolidated or just related?

MR. COFFIN: Well, that's a good point.

THE COURT: I am not sure.

MR. COFFIN: I am not sure whether they were actually consolidated, I am not sure about that.

anyways the point being that I have been actively involved in these cases, and to be fair and complete, Scott Nabers and I, Scott had cases in front of Judge Ludwig as well, we really collaborated together. Some of the issues Scott took the lead on and some of them I took the lead on.

But, suffice it to say that we have been litigating this case heavily for over a year prior to transfer to Your Honor or prior to moving for transfer to Your Honor I should say.

so, my experience in this particular case exists. I'm committed to this case. I have currently over 20 cases that have been vetted. I know that that's an issue. It's an issue for most MDL judges to determine who has cases, not only has cases where they represent real clients with real injuries, but they have been carefully vetted to ensure that proof of use exists and that science supports that injury. I can assure you that that's the case with the cases that I have.

In that regard, I'll move to collaboration, my third point. Collaboration is very important.

Obviously, you know relationships among PSC members are very important because we want to be a cohesive unit and have the same idea about how the litigation should

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This early stage, for the MDL anyway, there's not a whole lot that can be done in that regard except for what I think that I would at least try to do, and that is to reach out to my colleagues and talk to them about the Effexor cases and their idea about organization and structure and strategy.

I have been collaborating with Tim Becker, who has made an application. I don't think he's been in front of Your Honor before, but on multiple cases that we've filed, specifically Steve Corr, especially in the last few months, about the organization and structure for this hearing.

I've collaborated with Steve on the documents, some of the documents that you asked us to produce prior to this hearing. And I also reached out to I think everyone who has made an application because I've been talking to Effexor for a long while.

Most recently, Brian Aylstock, and not to steal Jason's thunder, I've talked to Jason specifically about these cases as well. Karen Menzies, Michael Baum, obviously Scott Nabers, I really believe that every one of these people I have tried to reach out to and talk to about their ideas about how this case should move forward.

And I think, as Brian mentioned and Jason, you know, we're going to have a really cohesive group here. I really believe that. We have a fantastic group of lawyers with an extraordinary amount of experience. And I think that your decision, although it may not be easy depending on how much you cut down, it will be the right decision either way you go.

So I'm committed to these cases. I have been for over a year and a half. I'm happy to be in front of you, and I look forward to the opportunity to serve if you see fit.

THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Coffin.

MR. COFFIN: Thank you, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Mr. Nabers.

(Pause in proceedings.)

MR. NABERS: Good morning, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Good morning.

MR. NABERS: And thank you for the opportunity to appear here today. I know you've had a chance to look at my application, so I will be brief.

I have been involved in mass torts for a long time. I started my career as a young lawyer in 1992, and as I got out of law school I started on silicon breast implants. And, as you can imagine, no pun intended, that was an eye opening experience to say the

least.

From there I worked on the Fen-Phen litigation. I have been involved in the Baycol litigation. I was in front of Judge Fallon in the Vioxx litigation.

During the last seven years, I've spent most of my time working on SSRI litigation. I was involved in the Paxil litigation. My firm is with Mr. Ed Blizzard who is on the Zoloft PSC here.

We had a number of Paxil cases that were filed in state court in Philadelphia, and I served in that case as a liaison for the plaintiffs, and fortunately we were able to resolve our cases in that litigation.

Since then, my time has mostly been focused on doing both Lexipro and Celexa. My firm has cases in the state court in Missouri and we're also involved in federal court in New Jersey.

I have played an active role in that
litigation on the case selection committee, on the
trial selection committee, on the expert committee, and
I have spent a great deal of time in the last 90 days
taking the corporate depositions of individuals from
Forest Pharmaceuticals that's located in New York.
That's actually what I was doing yesterday in New York

before I came down here this morning.

I have also been involved in getting experts for the plaintiffs' side, and we are getting ready to present experts in that litigation as well. As Your Honor knows, my firm is also heavily involved in the Zoloft litigation.

In that litigation my partner, Mr. Blizzard, is on the PSC and I participate on the case selection committee, on the trial selection committee. I have been involved in taking the Zoloft corporate witness depositions and was fortunate enough to get to travel with Mr. Cheffo to Paris to take some depositions, and so that was very nice.

THE COURT: There's just a part of me that's still jealous, and I don't know that I can actually get rid of it. I'm trying very hard.

MR. NABERS: Well, I think we should have taken you, Your Honor. You could have been --

THE COURT: I think so too.

MR. NABERS: -- there with us and ruled over the deposition. Currently, we're following the schedule order in this court, and I actually go back to New York from here to start expert depositions with Mr. Cheffo. And then not long after that I'm going to be taking defense expert depositions before the end of the

year.

I have worked with everybody that's an applicant for this steering committee in many, many of these different mass torts that I've been involved with and, honestly, Judge, if I was going to make a suggestion to the Court, I would just say pick them all because we really have all worked together for a number of years, and I would love to be on the committee, I would love to get to work with them.

I would also have to say I'm probably Mr.

Cheffo's favorite, so that would be another plus for me
to get to be on the committee.

THE COURT: That's got to count for something.

MR. NABERS: Our firm is very committed to this litigation, as Chris said earlier. I was the first lawyer to take the first three corporate witness depositions for Wyeth, those were the 30(b)6 depositions. They produced about 1.8 million pages of documents to my firm.

All of those documents have been put into a database, it's a searchable database. And there are several different firms, some of which are applicants for the committee. We have all been working together to process those documents and to code them so that

they're easily more searchable.

THE COURT: And they're available to the MDL now?

MR. NABERS: They are, yes, Your Honor. And we actually have done it much like the Zoloft documents have been done and much like the documents that Forest has produced in the Lexipro/Celexa litigation.

And so they are available once the confidentiality agreements are worked out they are available, and we can search the database, anybody that's involved in the litigation.

I did, also, as a part of the Effexor litigation, I worked on the confidentiality protective order with Mr. Cheffo. Like I said, I have been involved in the depositions with him, I have been involved in the discussions about the documents that they have produced.

perspective just because I was involved in taking a lot of the early Wyeth depositions. And so I know the corporate structure, I know the personnel that was there, and I think that's very helpful because, as you know, Effexor really started out as a Wyeth drug before Pfizer purchased Wyeth. And so I think that puts me in a unique perspective in terms of knowledge about the

company.

I would love to serve on the committee if Your Honor sees fit and I thank you for the opportunity to be here today.

THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Nabers. All right. We are up to Michael Baum.

MR. BAUM: Good morning, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Good morning.

MR. BAUM: I haven't actually been on a PSC in front of you, but I have been on a number of PSCs, maybe 20 I think, that have spanned between airline crashes to bank fraud and now, for the most part, I work on (indiscernible) type-drug litigation, for the most part, SSRIs.

I started working on SSRIs back in 1991, worked on some of the initial MDLs with respect to the Paxil Products Liability. Our firm was the lead counsel for the Paxil Products Liability case in front of Judge Pfaelzer, worked closely with Chris Coffin in that litigation.

At the time, Karen Menzies was in my firm and we were the lead counsel for that. She's now with Robinson Calcagni. We've all worked together closely on the SSRI cases for probably a dozen years now.

With respect to the birth defect litigation

itself, I found some of the initial documents that showed that there was a link between Paxil and cardiac birth defects while we were working on another litigation.

And that led to us surveying our database of Paxil clients and finding that some of our clients actually had taken the drug while they were pregnant and ended up with children that had cardiac birth defects.

That has led to our doing the initial research into the science. What is the mechanism for how the drug actually causes birth defects? It's closely related to the mechanism of how it cause -- it's related to its alleged anti-depressant effects.

The set of experts helped develop their -actually having worked with the ones who did the
initial research into the mechanism of how the molecule
of an anti-depressant interferes with the signaling of
embryonic cells, it's not just a neurotransmitter.
It's a signaling molecule for fetal and embryonic cells
as they're developing.

That set of scientists that developed that science we've worked with and developed as our experts, worked closely with the development of their expert reports.

I'm on the science committee for the Zoloft MDL birth defects cases, science committee and selection committee for the Celexa/Lexapro cases. I've worked closely with developing the documents, reviewing the documents, presenting the documents to the experts, and presenting the documents for the depositions just yesterday with Mr. Nabers.

I have quite a bit of experience with SSRIs, the science. I would like to be on the science committee for this case, as well as I am on the science committee for the Zoloft cases.

And I know all of these lawyers from either the Avandia litigation, the SSRI litigation I've done with them. I've worked on a number of MDLs with these people and would like to work with these people, and will be working.

We represent about 30 cases that are in this court or in the MDL. I have about a total of 70 Effexor cases. Some of the cases are in state court in California and are joint cases with the Robinson Calcagni firm.

I could probably keep talking. I've done an awful lot of SSRI litigation. I could probably answer a lot of questions about it. But, I think I would be a very helpful and committed member to the PSC. I will

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    be working with them anyway because we too apply the
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    science.
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              THE COURT:
                          Well, I appreciate knowing that.
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    Thank you very much.
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              MR. CHEFFO: Your Honor, sorry to interrupt.
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              THE COURT: It's all right.
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              MR. CHEFFO: Mr. Baum and I have talked about
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    this before, but I would just like to ask Your Honor at
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    the end if we can maybe have an in camera discussion
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    with you?
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              THE COURT:
                          The two of you?
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              MR. CHEFFO: Yes, Your Honor.
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              THE COURT: All right. I'm sure there's a
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    good reason for that, so yes, I think we'll have time
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    for that today.
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              MR. CHEFFO: Thank you, Your Honor.
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              THE COURT: Thank you.
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              (Pause in proceedings.)
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              THE COURT: All right. Then the next is
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    Timothy Becker.
              (Pause in proceedings.)
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              MR. BECKER: Hi, good morning, Your Honor. I
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    am the other new face in the crowd. It's a pleasure to
    appear in front of you today. Because I'm one of the
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    new faces, let me just tell you a little bit about who
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we are and what our firm is.

I've been doing mass tort litigation
basically since 2000-2001 when I was with Zimmerman
Reed, which is a, as the Court may know, a fairly big
mass tort firm in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

About two and a half years ago, my I guess best friend next to my wife and former best man in my wedding and I decided to form a firm together, which is now called Johnson and Becker, and our practice is about 90 percent committed to mass torts.

I worked in a number of MDLs over the years ranging from Baycol to Zicam, as my application noted. I took the Welding Rod case to verdict. While we had an unsuccessful verdict, was ultimately reversed on a motion for a new trial before Judge Dowd in the Northern District of Ohio, and then subsequently the case went on to settle after I left Zimmerman Reed.

I've also argued before the Eight, Ninth, and Tenth Circuit, and I tell you that, Judge, because I think that it gives me a little bit of a unique perspective and then it book ends the practice of litigation.

There's aspects of litigation that relate to how you present a case to a jury and work it up, and then there's aspects of it that relate to how you

sustain those things in front of a court of appeals, and I think my experience has given me some insight into that.

There are two primary reasons, Your Honor, that I have applied in this case because we did not make a similar application in the Zoloft litigation.

The first relates to a commitment that we have to this case.

As Mr. Coffin alluded to, we are working these cases together. Currently, we have nine plaintiffs on file here in federal court. I believe Mr. Coffin filed along with me the second case, second Effexor case in the country. We filed I think the third through fourth or fifth after that, and we have another 13 or so that have completed our vetting process in which we anticipate filing shortly into this court.

So we have an inventory, represent a number of clients somewhere north of 20, and that's important for a couple of reasons. First, as I tell people both in my firm and outside when they ask me what I'm doing, this is in times my favorite and least favorite case to work on. And the reason for that is the same.

Unlike any other clientele that I have, the plaintiffs in this case are probably the most deserving

that I represent, which is not to say that ultimately, this will be a successful litigation or not. It is just to say that when you represent a child it brings into your focus different things than when you represent somebody who has had the benefit of a long life.

So I have sat in living rooms with the mom, with the dad, and with the four year old and five year old, and seen the struggles that that particular child has.

And I note that because I think it is what compelled us to step forward in this case, because we made a commitment to those parents, we made a commitment to those kids, and we'll make the same commitment to you.

We were in this case from the beginning, we'll be in in the middle, and we'll be in at the end, and we will be in that because we have a profound sense of trying to seek justice on behalf of our clients, who in these cases, as you know, are children.

The second reason we made an application is I think it goes to our core philosophy as a law firm, which is this. We think that cases ought to be run by people who have cases. They have a particular interest in getting an outcome for the clients. They have a

particular awareness of the fact that there's a client at the end of the case, and that is what compels the decisions that they make.

And it is for that reason that you did not see us apply in the Zoloft case, where we have a very limited inventory, and as you're well aware, they're wonderful attorneys representing the plaintiffs in that case and carrying the water on behalf of firms like myself.

Here, we think it's a little different, and the reason for that is this. I agree with what Mr. Corr told you, that at the end of the day this case will likely have somewhere between 150 and 200 plaintiffs involved in it.

Because of that, currently we represent seven to ten percent of what the inevitable universe of cases will be. And as a result of that, there is a significant likelihood that one of my clients will be selected as a bellwether client somewhere down the road, or bellwether case, either by the plaintiffs or by Mr. Cheffo and his colleagues.

Now, I've been on both sides of that aisle where I've had bellwether cases selected where I was in the case, and where I had been involved in leadership and where I understood the documents and the science.

And then I've been involved where the call came one day and said congratulations, you have a defense bellwether pick. And I can assure you that my level of preparedness in those two situations was fundamentally different.

So, because of the fact that we believe that one of our cases at least will go through the vetting process, we think that we have an obligation to stand up on behalf of our clients and ask to be selected for this case.

Finally, I'll echo what my colleagues have said, which is I've worked with almost every one of the lawyers in this case, whether directly in litigation or through AJ or, you know, plaintiffs organizations. I like all of them a great deal. I believe our firm can contribute to this case and I would ask to be selected as a member of the PSC.

THE COURT: Thank you.

MR. BECKER: Thank you, Judge.

(Pause in proceedings.)

THE COURT: Next is Diane Nast.

(Pause in proceedings.)

MS. NAST: Good morning, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Good morning. Now, you don't

have to tell me everything you've done. I know what

you've done.

MS. NAST: Oh. And I promise you I won't do that.

THE COURT: But, I just need to know where you see yourself and what role in this type of coordinated litigation.

MS. NAST: Your Honor, I am happy to serve in whatever capacity, if any, that you think is appropriate in any of the positions in which people serve.

I am currently, as you know, co-lead counsel in Zoloft. I was co-lead counsel in Darvon, that case has been resolved. So I have the time to make the commitment to serve in any capacity in this case that you find appropriate. And I suspect you have a plan or at least the outline of a plan for what you think is appropriate here, and if I fit into that plan, that's good.

It's interesting to note the three MDLs that you've had. In Avandia we ended up with what, 60,000 cases, not filed cases, but 60,000 cases. There were 17 people I think on that steering committee ultimately.

THE COURT: At the end, yes, when they had been added.

MR. NAST: And in Zoloft, we're maybe going to have 450, 500, perhaps a little bit more cases. You had 32 applications for the steering committee, and 17 people were selected to serve on the PSC.

Here, we have a smaller number of cases, but as you have noted, the level of work is not significantly different. You still have to take the discovery, take the depositions, get the documents, and so forth.

So, however many people you find appropriate to appoint to the leadership positions, you at least have to deal with a much smaller applicant group than you had in the other cases. Counting Steve, I think there's 12, and I think that was your count as well.

The only thing I would say about myself is that one of my strongest values in litigation is civility. And some of my colleagues from time to time say that's softness. I don't think it's softness. I think it's a much easier way to get agreement rather than to end up, you know, head-to-head.

Then I only have two other points to make.

One is if you put both Brian and Jason on the committee, I think they should pay a premium assessment, not just a regular assessment.

THE COURT: Like Cadillac --

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              MS. NAST: Yeah, exactly.
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              THE COURT: -- medical insurance? Yes.
              MS. NAST: And then, secondly, not to
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    disagree with Mr. Nabers, but I think I could say that
    both Mr. Cheffo and Mr. Heim might pick me as their
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    favorite. And unless Your Honor has any questions, I
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    have nothing to add.
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              THE COURT: No, as usual, I appreciate your
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    interest and assistance.
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              MS. NAST:
                         Thank you.
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              THE COURT:
                          Thank you. Okay. Now we have
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    Mr. Zonies.
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              (Pause in proceedings.)
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              MR. ZONIES: Good morning, Your Honor.
              THE COURT: Why are you looking at the clock?
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              MR. ZONIES: I just wanted to make sure it
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    was still the morning. No offense, Jason. As always,
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    it is a great pleasure to be before the Court.
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              I believe this is almost exactly six years to
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    the day when I stood here for the first time, and I'm
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    thrilled and proud to be doing it again six years later
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    with more gray hair and a couple more inches around the
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    waist.
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Another great cause, another great group of

people to potentially work with, save Brian. And in

probably, as you know and I've said before, my favorite place to be in court, on my feet in front of fantastic

support.

And if Cheffo gets under oath, he'll admit it's actually me, and I think Bob Heim would too, as their favorites. I'm still working on the corner over there of the table.

It would obviously be a great pleasure to serve the Court again on a PSC in any capacity. I look forward to the opportunity to lead from the front for this Court at any point in time and will keep knocking on that door with any of these fine lawyers, many of whom I consider very good friends, some who I'm not so sure they would say that about me, but all great lawyers, all good colleagues, and we'd like to serve for the Court in any capacity.

THE COURT: Thank you. I do know how hard you work, and you actually litigated many matters in Avandia before me. So I know the quality of your litigation skills as well, and that was on the science, as well as other matters.

So I'm looking forward to having you participate here, and I'm trying to figure out how you and others of your wonderful co-colleagues here applying that are so involved in Zoloft, does that make

it easier or more difficult to coordinate between the two?

I already saw the common issues that emanate from natural litigation in taking depositions. And you think you have the ability to cut through that with this fine group and with Zoloft?

MR. ZONIES: I think that it actually is a great opportunity to help both cases move more efficiently to have a core group here in Effexor that can help with civility continue, you know, to focus and drive both cases simultaneously, particularly since we have the same esteemed opposing counsel.

And we've learned a lot already in Zoloft that I think can help us drive Effexor more efficiently, which I think will bring truly a congruence of these cases moving forward more quickly, more efficiently, driving them to their ultimate resolution. I mean I think this is actually a great benefit to Zoloft that this case exists.

THE COURT: I hope so. Otherwise, it's going to be a nightmare on two fronts.

MR. ZONIES: Yeah. That possibility exists, but I don't think with the group and the Court that's running this that that's a problem. I think actually it's a benefit.

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              THE COURT: Well, we count on your
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    professionalism. Thank you.
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              MR. ZONIES: I'll try to look for that in my
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    bag over there, Your Honor. Thank you.
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              THE COURT: I want to say that when it comes
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    to civility every one of you treats each other in just
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    the way that I would hope. But, I've noticed, like
    Diane Nast has noticed, that if men choose the term
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    "civility" or act that way, they are labeled
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    professionals. This is professionalism. And if women
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    do it, we're soft. So, you know, we take it on the
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    chin and then we keep moving on, right?
              MS. NAST: That's correct, Your Honor.
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              THE COURT: But, it is the way I expect my
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    attorneys in my MDLs to operate. And I don't expect
    anything different from any of you, so this is all good
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    news. All right.
              MR. CORR: I've never heard anyone call Diane
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    soft, Your Honor. Civil, yes, soft, no.
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              THE COURT: Well, they don't after they know
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    her or me. Okay. Mr. Schnieders.
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              MR. SCHNIEDERS: Good morning, Your Honor.
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    My names is Chris Schnieders. It's actually
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THE COURT: Schnieders.

Schnieders.

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MR. SCHNIEDERS: It's I before the E. I don't know if that's an Ellis Island mix up or what, but for whatever reason the I is before the E and so I'll forever be known as Chris Schnieders.

THE COURT: I'll try to remember.

MR. SCHNIEDERS: Your Honor, I'm with the law firm of Wagstaff and Cartmell. You're very familiar I know with Tom Cartmell, through the Avandia and the Zoloft litigation. He was up here many times speaking with you and having the opportunity to address you. I spent most of those times with many attorneys back in those seats back there, so I'm honored by the ability to sit here and talk with you today.

Every one that is on this panel is obviously highly qualified, and I'm honored to be a part of the group that has applied for this PSC here today. That being said, I'm going to highlight a couple aspects of my application. I know you've reviewed it, and there's nothing else in there that I particularly have to add other than to highlight a couple of things.

I believe it was the painter, Benjamin Haydon that said "Never suffer youth as an excuse for inadequacy," and that's something that I have taken to heart in my career. I believe that I owe it to my clients to be as capable as anyone that I'm around at

up trial picks.

 I don't have the CVs that some of my colleagues here today speaking to you have. I don't have the PSC appointments that have been present in the past, but I have done the work on both a micro and a macro level. When I say that, I've done the PSC level work. Dating back to Celebrex, Bextra, I helped work

In the Avandia litigation I was on the Daubert committee, I was on the science committee. And every one of those hearings we had where Jill and Tom did such a great job on science day I was sitting in that box over there helping the team move along, so I've worked on all that.

I took expert depositions in that case. I helped work up the trial package and was one of the lawyers that was lucky enough to be here when the Burford case was about to be tried on that trial team.

So I've worked in the past in the Zoloft litigation. I've been lucky enough to have been asked to take numerous depositions. And that's an honor that I've been trusted with that and I appreciate every aspect of that.

I also serve on the marketing and on the -
I'm sorry, the marketing and the discovery committees

in that litigation, and those are a couple of areas where we feel like we're really starting to push to be able to do what we need to for our clients and to help move that litigation forward as it is moving and progressing now.

I also, in that litigation, serve as the deposition coordinator, and so I've had the opportunity to talk and meet with Mr. Cheffo and several of his colleagues numerous times. I get along with each and every one of them. We may not always see eye-to-eye on what the issues are, but we've always been very respectful of one another, and I would certainly expect that to continue.

I've had the opportunity to work with everybody in this box. I will continue to work with everybody in this box. And I appreciate having such high quality colleagues to be able to work on cases such as this.

On the micro level, which is, you know, more the case specific side of things, I have the opportunity, and I have a strong base and still do, with working in case-specific issues, with talking to the clients, with working on things like plaintiffs' fact sheets, explaining to clients what's going on on the upper levels of the litigation, you know, why

things take as much time as they do, what's happening, and the fact that there's not just an inert movement on the -- on the entire case.

I think something that I could bring to this PSC is the ability to take the macro and the micro and juxtapose those together in order to make it the most efficient PSC that it could be, and also to help along in the Zoloft litigation where I'm highly involved in these issues as well, and I believe that we can get this to dovetail very nicely.

We do have an inventory at Wagstaff and Cartmell, and I am counsel of record in the case that's filed before Your Honor at this point. I would just close by saying that I would appreciate the honor of being named to this PSC and I humbly ask for that. And I'd like to answer any questions you might have.

THE COURT: I don't have any questions because I know that you have been working on the other matters, not because I saw you here, but because your name is on every pleading that came out of the litigation. So I know that you were right in there, so thank you.

MR. SCHNIEDERS: Thank you, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Karen Barth Menzies.

(Pause in proceedings.)

MS. MENZIES: Good morning, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Good morning.

MS. MENZIES: I'm Karen Barth Menzies from the firm of Robinson, Calcagne, Robinson, Shapiro, Davis. It's a pleasure to be before you again. This will be my second application to the Court. I was involved in the Avandia cases for awhile in the PSC and then kind of got a little distracted into the Paxil world, and I apologize for that, but have used a lot of that experience I think to the benefit of this litigation.

For starters, I would like to say that I'm delighted by the group of people we have here. You know, a lot of times we come to these MDLs and there's some people that stick out like sore thumbs, and you're kind of wondering oh, I didn't even know they were doing that litigation, and I can't say that about this group. I'm just thrilled that we've got a wonderful team and I'm really looking forward to working with them, regardless of whether I'm appointed.

To start off, as my experience, I think that, you know, we always see each other in different seminars and conventions and people always say what are you working on, what are you working on.

And I think for the last 15 years I've been

saying the SSRI cases. This has been an area of dedication for me in my career. I believe very strongly in these litigations.

In 2001, I was appointed lead counsel of the MDL, the Paxil withdrawal MDL with Judge Pfaelzer in the Central District of California, and that was really my first introduction to MDLs and I kind of learned a lot along the way.

But, I was happy to report that we had a very contentious fight for a number of years with very able lawyers at King and Spalding. Chilton Varner in particular was my counterpoint, and by the end of the day, we ended up settling the litigation less than a month before our first trials.

And thereafter, when we settled our inventory we didn't continue with cases, but myself and Ms.

Varner assisted the mediator on Judge Pfaelzer's request and continued to get the rest of the litigation settled, including me acting as liaison counsel for the other plaintiff's counsel and in pro per plaintiffs, and were able to resolve those cases, over 3200 cases. So it was a proud accomplishment for me and my real introduction to the MDL world.

It was followed by appointment in 2006 as colead of the Paxil, co-lead and liaison counsel for the

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Paxil mass tort program, which was run similar to an MDL.

And what we did there, and a large part of our group is here today still, we setup -- I was co-lead with Clayton Clark, and what we had done is setup a real cohesive group of individuals, and I was responsible for kind of the management of that group, and that's why I've come to this Court seeking an appointment to leadership because I can say I value very highly the input of my colleagues.

I also value the organization and keeping the In that litigation we had weekly calls group moving. with a formal agenda, and my task was to run those weekly calls, setup the agenda, and assign tasks, and most importantly, follow up on tasks to make sure that we continue to move the cases forward in litigation and to continue to get input in the valuable work from the entire group.

We housed the documents for that litigation, gave access to them. There wasn't a formal MDL so we just setup an informal working group, and we made sure that everybody had access to those documents as they needed, as well as once we settled our inventory, which was in about 2010, we didn't continue with further cases, but even to this day we still house that

document depository and have assisted plaintiffs in especially where to go to get to Lauren Rosemary if they're needing updates on a litigation. So we continue to play that role.

And I would say an important part of my focus, as you know, I've been working on the Zoloft cases with my partner, Mark Robinson. Effexor in particular to me is important.

We had filed some cases in California before the petition for the MDL was filed and, frankly, the answer or the reason we did that was because we didn't think it was going to be that big of a litigation. I still don't think it's going to be that big of a litigation. I think Mr. Cheffo is correct, we're looking at around 150 cases, maybe 200 at the end of the day.

We have five cases pending in California right now, and there is a JCCP that's been appointed. Since the MDL petition was filed, we have submitted --we filed a number of cases and now currently have 32 before Your Honor, and so I'm looking forward to actually working in the California case in conjunction really with the leadership here in the MDL.

I have had a tolling agreement on these cases with counsel for six years. I have clients that I have

represented that long. And, as I have told you, I have quite a few clients in this litigation.

I really, really am looking forward to this case moving forward quickly, as quickly and as efficient we can. And I am all about professionalism for sure, and I think we need to be, and I believe you need to choose your battles, but I also think we need to do what's necessary to bring the issues in dispute to the Court, get them resolved in moving forward quickly.

We are housing documents for the Effexor litigation. I've been working with Mr. Coffin's firm and Scott Nabers in doing that and yes, those are available. We can sort of just parlay those into the group, into the MDL.

In this situation we haven't been using an outside vendor, we have been doing it inhouse. I think it's been very efficient. If we need to expand that and get more help, we certainly are willing to do that. But so far, we have been running it in a very efficient manner. And I think that's just my main point, unless you have any questions.

THE COURT: I don't.

MS. MENZIES: Thank you, Your Honor.

THE COURT: I know your qualifications.

Thank you.

MS. MENZIES: Thank you for your time.

THE COURT: Is there anyone else that needs

to address the Court? I would want you all to

understand how appreciative I am of your willingness to serve yet again, and as far as I'm concerned this won't

be a difficult decision for me.

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I would, however, like to speak to a number of you concerning where that plan is fomenting because Ms. Nast is right, I always have an idea of what I want to do, but I am just experienced enough to realize and practice the actual rule I've adopted, listen to the attorneys because they're in the middle of it, and that's all the attorneys. And I do want to talk to some of you about assuming certain positions before I actually publish an order appointing those that will be serving here.

So, I would like to speak to you personally, each one of you, except everybody always seems to have a flight to run to. So, in order of whoever doesn't have to -- you know, whoever has to go first, I would like to see you.

We have not much to talk about yet on this list except scheduling for future events. And I know that my law clerks have to leave so that's okay. But

we won't be scheduling from the bench. But when you are named you'll have to give me an idea of how often you wish to meet.

I find that meetings are productive for you because you get other work done, but I don't think a monthly meeting in court is necessarily necessary. So we'll work, as we have in Zoloft, off and on every other month in court, and in court as needed, of course, if there's oral arguments. But would liaison counsel like to address the Court?

MR. CHEFFO: Just very briefly, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Yes.

MR. CHEFFO: I think that Your Honor was actually encouraged and comforted to hear a lot of really synergies both with what Your Honor said and what many of the lawyers have. And I would echo really what they said, I think this is a, you know, a very talented collection of lawyers in terms of their skill set.

From our perspective and, you know, I was going to say don't really have a dog in this fight, but to some extent, we do, because I think it's important that we are able to efficiently represent our clients on both sides.

So, what I think I would urge is, you know, I

think experience is important in these cases. You know, as Your Honor I think said in the Zoloft litigation it's true, to the extent that someone is not on a PSC doesn't mean that they can't participate, and we've heard that today. There's always room. So I think that having experienced leadership is important.

I think that having cases and a commitment is important. We saw I think an expectation early in Zoloft of thousands of cases and, you know, again, Your Honor will know best about whether the size of the PSC would have been the same if there was 400 cases as thousands, but I think that's at least a consideration because while certainly I know it makes sense on our side to have the appropriate resources and certainly on theirs, there can somehow be a lack of efficiency when there's, frankly, more people necessary than to do it, and more kind of hierarchy and chains.

So I'm not specifically kind of alluding to any person or really commenting on Zoloft so much, but just saying here I think that the PSC probably in our view it works best when it's right sized to the number of cases.

Then I think probably the most important thing is a full commitment, and Your Honor said this and I think some of the counsel. And we have a unique

opportunity here because we do have a limited university of cases. Frankly, I'm not sure why there should be any state court cases. Every case that is filed is -- first of all, there's probably less than ten of them.

If there's only going to be 150 or 200 cases, anybody who is on the PSC and on the leadership can certainly file any of those cases. There's no jurisdictional issues. Both the ones that are filed can be, you know, dismissed without prejudice and refiled here because the only controversy, and this was not a matter of not coordinating with state courts. You know, we have taken to heart, I know Your Honor has made that point, if people want to file in state courts, that's fine, that's their ability to do that. We will coordinate as best we can with them.

This is not a matter of saying federal court over state court, but the real question is here is so have folks who are applying for a leadership position, and it's hard to lead when your allegiances are between state court and federal court.

I, again, don't see a reason at this point in the litigation where we have such a unique opportunity where the plaintiffs have filed an application, where Pfizer supported the application that we can't do what

needs to be done in the MDL without ultimately having to worry about stepping on toes and trial dates and cross-noticing depositions and having other folks involved.

So to us, that's probably one of the most important things that I think is a fair certainly request for Pfizer, and with all due respect, I think it's a fair request for the Court to make of folks who want to lead this MDL.

So, with that, you know, in terms of the civility, the coordination, kind of the ethical, hard fighting, I think all that we completely agree and I would expect to take those models from Zoloft with this group that Your Honor appoints.

THE COURT: Thank you.

MR. CHEFFO: I don't know if Mr. Heim has anything to add.

THE COURT: Mr. Heim?

MR. HEIM: Your Honor, I think the only point that I would make is a point that Your Honor has made before, and that is we have seen that litigation works best when the PSC group works well among themselves. When they're cooperative among themselves they move faster, and when they move faster they get to us faster.

So having a group that works cooperatively among themselves and works cooperatively and constructively with us in trying to avoid having to bring things to Your Honor so that we can move the litigation because we well know, all of us now, that when Your Honor sets a schedule you expect counsel to keep to that schedule.

So I think constructively working together, constructively working with us, having a group like that serves everybody's interest.

THE COURT: And it is the verbatim truth.

There's nothing like a PSC that works like the spokes on one wheel instead of another way. And I am so used to Avandia and that smooth machinery right from the get go, that I'm always surprised if something else happens, and yet, that's got to be dealt with. It will happen.

MR. HEIM: And that's the point I wanted to make. Thank you, Your Honor.

THE COURT: Thank you very much. Mr. Corr?

MR. CORR: Very briefly, Your Honor. Mr.

Cheffo mentioned the state court and the PSC and how they coordinate.

I think it's also important to recognize that when there are attorneys who are on the PSC who also

are involved in state court cases they do have obligations to their clients that sometimes the clients want to be in the state court and not in the federal court because it's closer to their home or whatever the reasons are.

But, it also is helpful in coordinating I think because you can see some of the issues we've run into in other litigations where there is an attorney in state court who's not involved in the MDL and we can't really get things coordinated as well.

When we have PSC members who are also involved in this litigations we tend to be able to coordinate a lot better and put the MDL first.

THE COURT: I've noticed that perspective as well. It is a situation that has to be viewed with balance.

MR. CORR: Right. And I appreciate the point that Mr. Cheffo raised, but I think there is that balance that we have to look at as well.

The second thing that I wanted to mention that I forgot to mention earlier was that I did work on a general case management order working off of the Avandia and the Zoloft. But, quite frankly, my schedule wasn't really matching up very well with Mark's the past couple of weeks, so I didn't get that

circulated out.

The other thing that we did also talk about among the PSC was the protective order. I know in Your Honor's PTO-1 said that we should work on that after the PSC was formed.

I did take an initial draft of it, started working on it, circulated it around. I know there are issues that have come up in other litigations that people want to talk with the other side about. So we did kind of shelve that until we have a PSC formed. But we'll get on that right away and have a protective order pretty soon I would think.

THE COURT: All right.

MR. CORR: Thanks.

THE COURT: I appreciate that update.

MR. CORR: Okay. Thanks.

THE COURT: Anything else? Then I would like to recess, and I think I will talk to you, Mr. Cheffo and Mr. Baum, first. And then the rest of you come back one by one. All right?

(Proceedings adjourned, 11:58 a.m.)

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CERTIFICATION

I, Brad Anders, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript from the electronic sound recordings of the proceedings in the above-captioned matter.

10-30-13

Brad Anders